



Every year, INL organizes employee volunteers to ring bells at the Salvation Army's Red Kettles. Here, Mike Keeton, left, and his son, Bridger, join members of the Bonneville DeMolay.

INL gives back to the eastern Idaho community in 2010

By [Lori Priest](#) and [Nicole Stricker](#), *INL Communications & Governmental Affairs*

As 2010 winds to a close, Idaho National Laboratory is taking stock of its efforts to be a good neighbor to the community and the state. While INL's employees and corporate leaders are always eager to donate their time and services, such efforts are especially rewarding during another tough economic year.

During the holiday season, INL contractor [Battelle Energy Alliance](#) supports the annual sitewide Christmas for Families program. This year, employees "adopted" 98 families to provide gifts for 315 children, and BEA donated \$4,250 toward food boxes for each family. Employees also bought gifts for 250 children in the Salvation Army's Angel Tree program.

And each year, the Team INL employee volunteer program provides support for the [Salvation Army's Christmas Bell Ringing](#) program, which raises money to help provide food and shelter to the less fortunate in our community. This year, INL volunteers filled 52 two-hour shifts, which saved the Salvation Army more than \$1,000 that it would have had to pay to employees to ring the bells.

The [United Way](#) recently announced that INL employees contributed more than \$320,000 to this year's fund drive. BEA contributed \$55,000 in corporate funds this year, making the total INL contribution nearly \$376,000. Since BEA took over operation of INL in 2005, employee contributions to the United Way have exceeded \$1.8 million and BEA has contributed an additional \$310,000 in corporate donations.



This year, INL employees and BEA corporate funds contributed nearly \$376,000 to eastern Idaho United Way organizations.

BEA also supports the community through its [Team INL](#) employee volunteer program, which provides a little bit of funding to help employees make a difference in their communities. The funding is often used to purchase building materials, paint, essential items and clothing. Since 2005, BEA employees and volunteer groups have completed more than 145 Team INL projects, including providing Christmas gifts each year for the teenagers living at [The Haven](#) transitional housing shelter and to developmentally disadvantaged individuals living in local group homes.

This year's projects included: a school supply donation drive yielding \$5,000 in supplies and monetary donations; painting the YMCA's rock climbing gym; and providing chaperones for a shopping spree organized by the Salvation Army for 27 less fortunate children. Another project collected donations, and packed and mailed 164 holiday care packages to U.S. troops serving overseas.



A number of INL programs provide professional development opportunities to help K-12 teachers to deepen their knowledge of STEM concepts.

And INL managers participating in the lab's License to Lead program participated in three community service projects that included: painting and deep cleaning client work areas at the Development Workshop; painting, repairing signs and trimming the weeds along the entrance road at the Targhee National Forest, Upper Mesa Falls campground; and interior/exterior painting, repairing concrete, staining fences and providing general cleanup at the FAITH and CLUB housing units.

This year alone, INL's education program office contributed \$10,000 in dual credit support regionally and \$20,000 in scholarships to [Eastern Idaho Technical College](#) (EITC) and [Idaho State University's Energy Systems Technology and Education Center](#). INL also supported science fairs; family science and math nights; science, technology, engineering and mathematics ([STEM](#)) related camps for students; STEM field trips; and after-school club support.

BEA also provides corporate funding for teacher professional development, high school and teacher summer internships, and the [INL Scholastic Tournament](#). Each year, INL organizes the [Hispanic Youth Symposium](#), which encourages Latino teens to pursue education and brings regional universities together to offer scholarships to participants. In 2010 alone, these universities awarded

\$3.8 million in scholarships to nearly 190 Idaho students.

In addition, INL gives \$10,000 each year to the EITC Foundation for student scholarships. And INL employees participated in EITC's [Great Race for Education](#), as both players and support volunteers. This year, the event raised \$26,500 for the foundation's scholarship fund.

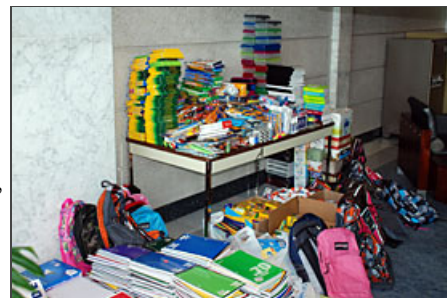
INL also donates technical expertise to community organizations. Since 2005, the lab has provided 5,500 hours' worth of technical assistance to the community. Each year, the [INL Technical Assistance Program](#) provides INL technical expertise to state and local government, and regional small businesses. The requesting organization can receive, at no cost to it, up to 40 hours of laboratory employee time to address technical needs that cannot readily be met by commercially available resources in the region.

Since the program's inception, INL has supported 144 projects. This year's 33 projects included assistance for universities and several technical and agricultural companies in Idaho and beyond. For example, INL's glassblower will create unique laboratory equipment for [University of Idaho](#) and the [University of Montana's Chemistry/Biochemistry Department](#). Another project with a New Mexico archaeologist could help identify underground mine shafts. An Idaho seed potato company will receive grant-writing assistance, and INL researchers will lend their expertise to companies developing high-energy biocoal or biofuels from algae.

Since the BEA contract began in February 2005, BEA has provided more than \$5 million in corporate funding to numerous educational, philanthropic and technology-based economic development programs. BEA also provides funding to the Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Center, Development Workshop, [American Red Cross](#), Salvation Army and numerous nonprofit agencies that feed, clothe or provide shelter and services to the less fortunate in surrounding communities. INL funds philanthropic projects that focus on community, health and human services, and culture. In total, more than \$1 million in corporate funding has been given throughout the past five years to support roughly 100 agencies and programs.

"INL is proud to be able to help so many people through our corporate funding and through the generosity of our employees," said Lori Priest, INL's community relations coordinator. "During another year of economic challenges, INL will continue to do its part to support education programs, find avenues to help the less fortunate and support the economic development of the state."

[Feature Archive](#)



INL employees held a school supply donation drive that yielded \$5,000 in supplies and monetary donations.